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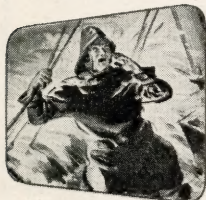
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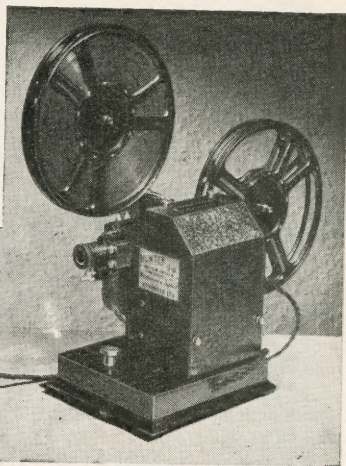
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for 2/10 post paid (four issues).

GORDON S. MALTHOUSE, Editor

A.C.W. TO BECOME A QUARTERLY

WE announce this month a very notable development in the history of "Amateur Cine World." In recent issues we have been writing happily of attractive features that have been devised for forthcoming issues. Those features will appear, as planned, but not so soon as we had intended, for "Amateur Cine World" is to become a quarterly magazine. We cannot pretend that this development is a satisfaction to ourselves or that it will be welcomed by our readers, but at the same time we feel that it cannot be described as a retrograde step.

In the quota for the coming quarter we have, in common with other journals, suffered a further reduction in the supply of paper. But the technical magazine is at a disadvantage compared with journals of the 'popular' type, for the amount of paper now used is based on pre-war tonnage. The wider scope of the popular family journal permitted of large circulations and big issues. Consequently, although the reduction in paper tonnage (some 30 per cent.) is the same in all cases, the specialised magazine suffers disproportionately.

The following alternatives were open to us: we could have continued to publish the magazine monthly, but it would have been little more than a pamphlet and its usefulness thereby greatly impaired; or we could have maintained our present size, but have reduced the number of copies printed. But who is to decide who was to have the magazine and who was to go without? On all counts it seemed that publishing "Amateur Cine World" as a quarterly was the best solution, for thereby we are still able to perform our function, reach the same number of readers as heretofore and continue to represent, as in the past, the substandard film movement.

This last consideration is, we feel, of the greatest importance. As an attenuated monthly or as a monthly that reached only a comparatively small proportion of cine users, we could not efficiently represent this vast movement at a time when a means of co-ordinating diverse interests, of acting as spokesman, of

providing a platform for the dissemination of opinion, is more than ever essential.

To-day the substandard film is more widely used than at any time since its inception. The Government sponsors a 16mm. non-theatrical films scheme of enormous ramifications; and that the machinery is in existence for the furtherance of its plans is largely due to the amateur, for whom the industry was in the first place developed.

In the stress of war, however, he must necessarily accept sacrifices in the way of reduced supplies and restrictions on filming; and this is another reason why he should continue to have his own journal to keep him in touch with affairs, to be watchful in his interests, to serve as the link between trade and public. It is scarcely necessary to remind readers that "Amateur Cine World" is the only journal serving the interests of the amateur in this country.

We are confident, therefore, that they will accept the change as the best solution of a difficult problem. All our services—including our Enquiry Bureau—will be maintained as hitherto, and the style of the magazine will be unaltered, although naturally there will have to be certain modifications in the contents, since series articles would not be appropriate for a quarterly publication; each will have to be self-contained. We are sorry that it has not been possible to complete all of the current series in this number, but here again we must ask your indulgence. The established features such as "Famous Library Films" and "Do It Yourself" will continue to appear in the quarterly, as well as "Tracking It Down," the notes on sound already announced, but each will be complete in itself.

And now, although we bid you goodbye for three months, we would ask you to remember that we are here every day to serve your interests, and invite your co-operation in helping the new AMATEUR CINE WORLD to play a vital role in a future which, uncertain though it may be, is nevertheless full of hope.

THE EDITOR.

The Winter issue of "Amateur Cine World" will be on sale Dec. 1st

Adapting the 200B to SOUND

By
R.W. HALL,
B.Sc.

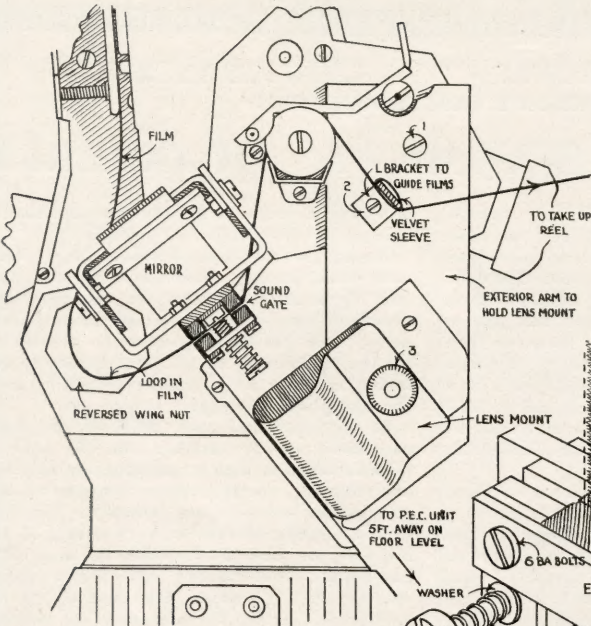


FIG. 1.

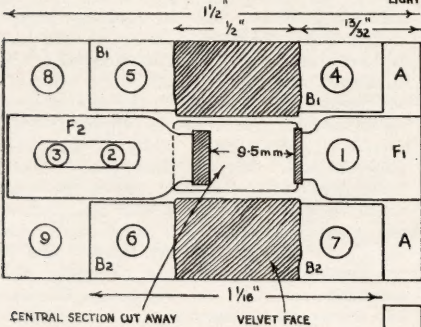


FIG. 3.

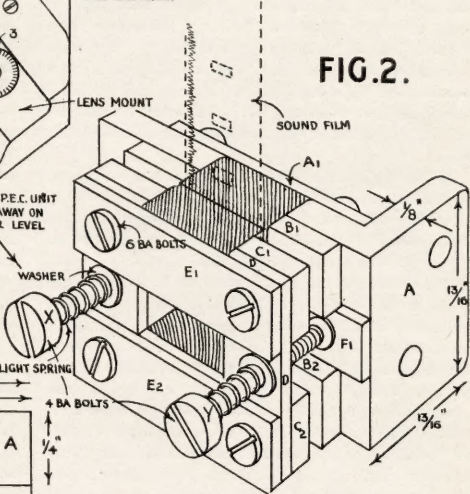
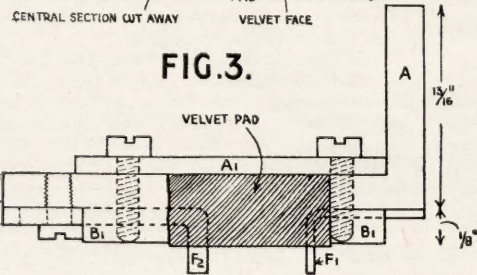


FIG. 2.

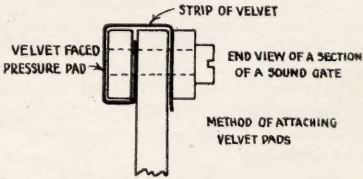


FIG. 4.

Although this article is primarily concerned with the adaption of the 200B, the method described is extremely flexible and can easily be adapted for use on other makes of projectors, both 9.5mm. and 16mm. It is regretted that the description of the pre-amplifier unit must be held over until our next issue.

THE 200B is undoubtedly one of the most popular projectors on the market; its usefulness and scope the writer has been able to enhance by adding to it a sound head for the reproduction of 9.5mm. sound films. The system is novel in that the photo-cell is not located in the projector but is some 16" distant from it, in a separate unit. The sound track is projected in the same way as the picture area by means of a second condenser-projection lens system.

The film, however, must be moving continuously and not intermittently, at 24 frames per second, when the sound track is projected, hence the sound head is placed between the bottom of the picture gate and the lower take-up sprocket. This position is also necessary to obtain synchronisation between sound and picture. The take-up sprocket pulls the film continuously through the sound gate, where the sound track is illuminated by the exciter lamp and condenser, and a sharply focussed and magnified image of the sound track is projected on to one face of a metal box, in which is cut a narrow slit. Immediately behind this slit, inside the box, is the photo-electric-cell with its major axis parallel to the length of the slit.

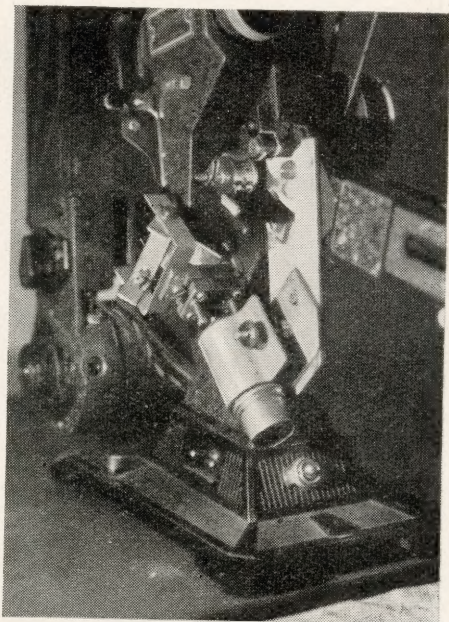
The motion of the sound track results in varying amounts of light being transmitted through the slit to the photo-cell, which causes the cell to generate the correspondingly varying electrical impulses. These small electrical impulses are amplified, first by a preamplifier (also inside the box) before being conveyed to the power amplifier, where they are further amplified and finally converted by the loudspeaker into varying air vibrations, i.e., sound.

The results I have obtained using this method are very good, the quality of both speech and music being very satisfactory, even with the normal AC/DC motor fitted as standard on the projector, though an improvement might be made by the incorporation of a heavy flywheel in the driving system. My own 200B is driven by a synchronous motor, so that its speed is absolutely constant. However, these are only refinements and very good results can be obtained without them.

The total cost of the system is not large, the chief item of expenditure being the photo-cell and amplifier. The photo-cell I use is a Cetron CEI costing two pounds new. The amplifier should not cost more than two pounds (including the valve). The

metal parts of the sound head cost me nothing, being obtained from odds and ends of brass scrap. The projector lens for the head must be a good one and will cost from two to three pounds new, although I purchased a second-hand one for one pound and found it extremely satisfactory. The condenser in the exciter lamphouse will cost about five to ten shillings.

This completes a resumé of the major



The 200B converted for sound

expenditure and, I think, it will be generally agreed upon that it is not large. I have omitted to include the cost of the power amplifier because if the reader is not already in possession of one, the LF stages of any modern radio set can be used by connecting the output of the preamplifier to the pick-up sockets of the set.

Owing to the delicate nature of the sound track on so small a gauge as 9.5mm., the question of wear on the film is extremely important. I have verified that the complete projector, etc., produces no noticeable scratching of the sound track or picture area, by running a length of new, unused sound

film through the projector fifty times. At the end of these test runs the film was carefully examined and found to be flawless except for the usual slight wear at the edge of the film well outside the sound track.

The photographs show the finished sound head attached to the projector. The lamp-house of the exciter lamp is not shown, partly to give a clearer view of the system, but chiefly, I must admit, because I have not yet constructed a really workmanlike lamp-house for the lamp and condenser.

The mode of construction will probably be clearer from the diagrams. The complete sound head mounted on the 200B is shown in Fig. 1, the various components being indicated. It will be noted that the wing nut for tilting the projector has been reversed so that it does not obstruct the path of the film or foul the sound head. The lens has also been omitted to show the method of mounting more clearly. We can conveniently divide the whole system into five main parts:—

1. The sound gate.
2. Mirror and bracket for reflecting light from the condenser on to the sound track in the sound gate.
3. Extension arm and lens mount for supporting the projection lens.
4. Exciter lamp and condenser.
5. Photo-electric cell and slit, with preamplifier. This will be considered last of all.

The angle of projection of the sound track is about 45° , as will be seen from the layout of gate and lens in Fig. 1. After considerable research I have reduced the length of throw of the sound track image from 10 feet (as mentioned in July letter to A.C.W.) to the very much shorter one of 16" in conjunction with a slit of about .002" (measured with feeler gauges). A slit of this width is quite easy to make (it is adjustable, of course) and will be described in the article dealing with the photocell unit. The results with this new slit and "throw" combination are very gratifying, the higher frequencies being well reproduced.

As the magnification with my particular projection lens over a 16" throw is $\times 7$, the effective scanning slit on the 9.5mm. track is only about .0003", which gives a good theoretical response. This short throw could possibly be reduced even further by use of a lens of shorter focal length than the 40mm. lens I am using, thus making it possible for the photo-cell and pre-amplifier to be built into the front of the projector.

Now follow constructional details of the system:—

1.—The Sound Gate

Fig. 2 shows the complete sound gate ready assembled, while Fig. 3 shows the

plan and elevation of the main portion of the gate. A few measurements only have been given on the diagrams for the sake of clarity and also because they can easily be deduced from the diagrams, since they are not very critical.

The basis of the gate consists of a piece of angle brass $1\frac{1}{2}" \times \frac{1}{8}" \times \frac{1}{8}" \times \frac{1}{4}"$ (A in Figs. 2 and 3). Two holes are drilled in the short arm to enable it to be bolted to the side of the projector, as shown in Fig. 1, by means of two 4BA bolts screwing into two 4BA tapped holes in the projector side. A_1 and A_2 are $\frac{1}{16}"$ thick brass strips $\frac{1}{4}"$ wide. These anchor the ends of the two velvet cushions round B_1 and B_2 . B_1 and B_2 are $\frac{1}{8}"$ thick brass strips and each have two 6BA tapped holes (holes 4, 5, 6 and 7. Fig. 3) so that each can be fixed to A by two 6BA bolts which also hold A_1 and A_2 to A. The plan in Fig. 3 shows this clearly.

Similarly, C_1 and C_2 are $\frac{1}{8}"$ brass strips held to the $\frac{1}{16}" \times \frac{1}{8}" \times 1\frac{1}{8}"$ plate D by 6BA bolts and likewise also holding $\frac{1}{16}"$ strips E_1 and E_2 to D. The strips E_1 and E_2 (like A_1 and A_2) clamp one end of the velvet cushions. These strips of velvet protect the film from wear in passing between the two sections of the sound gate. They are attached as shown in Fig. 4, the velvet strip being inserted between the brass strips, pulled tight and the bolts tightened; any surplus strip is then cut off with a razor blade.

The angle piece A and the pressure plate D both have rectangular pieces of brass cut out of them to enable light from the condenser to pass to the film in the gate and then out to the lens. These openings may be about $\frac{1}{4}" \times \frac{1}{4}"$ and are not critical. They are situated as shown in Figs. 2 and 3. The best way of making these is to drill out most of the brass and finish off to the rectangular shape with a small flat file.

The two units of the sound gate, i.e., part one consisting of the base A plus the strips A_1 , A_2 , B_1 and B_2 , and part two consisting of plate D plus strips C_1 , C_2 , E_1 and E_2 , are held together by 4BA bolts X and Y (Fig. 2) as follows:—The base A is drilled and tapped to receive the two bolts (holes 1 and 2 in Fig. 3). Plain holes are drilled in D. Small springs are then slid on to the shanks of X and Y, together with two washers. The two parts of the gate are then assembled and X and Y tightened until the gate parts are held loosely together by the springs. It is advisable to have most of the shanks of X and Y unthreaded, so that the pressure plate D can slide evenly on the bolts.

The film is guided through the sound gate by means of the small brackets F_1 and F_2 .

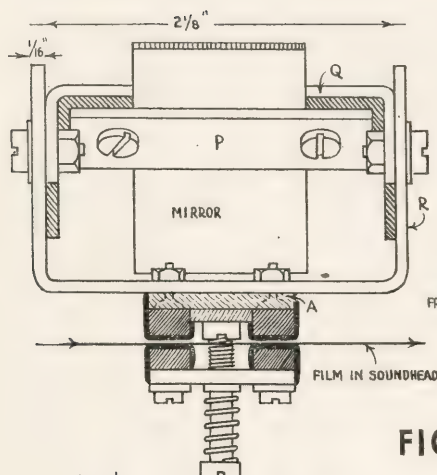


FIG. 5.

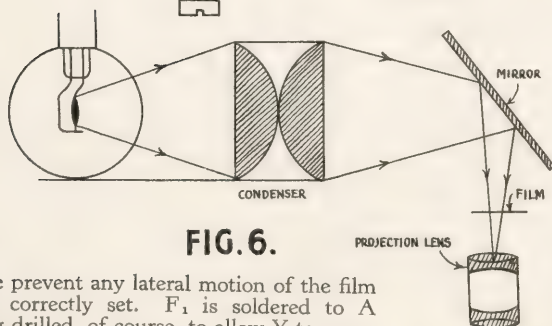
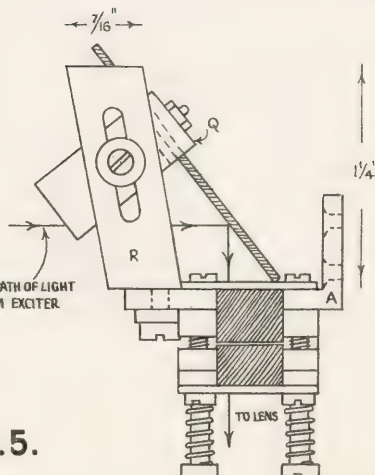


FIG. 6.

These prevent any lateral motion of the film when correctly set. F_1 is soldered to A (being drilled, of course, to allow Y to screw into A). The distance of the turned-up portion of F_1 from the edge of the head is $13/32$ " (see Fig. 3). This should be adhered to as it ensures that the film runs through the sound gate without being laterally displaced between the bottom of the picture gate and the take-up sprocket, and so saves the edges of the film from undue wear.

F_2 is longer than F_1 and has a slot cut in it so that it is adjustable and is locked to A by a 4BA bolt screwing into a tapped hole in A (hole 3). The correct distance between the outer portions of F_1 and F_2 should, of course, be a little over 9.5mm. Finally two holes (8 and 9 in Fig. 3) are drilled in A to provide a means of attaching the bracket for supporting the mirror (used to reflect the light from the exciter lamp on to the film in the gate). This completes the sound gate, and on assembly we shall have the unit shown in Fig. 2. Wear will be small as the film is only in contact with the velvet-faced strips B_1 , B_2 and C_1 , C_2 , and only very slight pressure is maintained between them.

The light from the exciter lamp is reflected into the sound gate by the mirror assembly.

Fig. 5 shows a front and side view of the bracket. The drawings are, I think, self-explanatory; the mirror (simply a silvered microscope slide) is clamped between the brass strips P and Q, the latter being bolted to the main bracket R. The mirror can be tilted, within limits, by the slot in R. R is bolted to A by two 6BA bolts passing through the holes 8 and 9 in Fig. 3.

The exciter lamp and condenser are housed in a separate metal box. The lamp is a 12 volt 3 amp car headlamp which is run from a small transformer and provides a very efficient light source. The condenser used was 2" in diameter and of 1" focal length. The exact position of the lamp and condenser is not given as it will vary with the condenser used. However, the system should, by means of the mirror, produce an image of the lamp filament (just out of focus) on the sound track in the sound gate. Fig. 6 shows the optical arrangement.

It would be most convenient to mount the whole projector on to a wooden baseboard. The exciter lamp house can then be mounted on supports on the baseboard so that the condenser throws the light on to the mirror and thence to the gate. The supports used should be capable of swinging round so that the lamp house can be swung out of position to allow room for the threading of the projector and then quickly swung back and locked in position ready for use.

(Continued on page 124)

HOME THOUGHTS OF AN EVACUEE

LETTER writing keeps touch with old friends. One particular letter had an instructive sequel. I sent a copy of an old film of mine to a schoolmaster. This film has been used in schools, but some people do not think it suitable for the purpose. It is a quarrying film, imaginatively treated and (though I say it) more lively than the very dull and matter-of-fact pictures which often pass for educational purposes.

So I asked the schoolmaster to try it on his boys and let me know the result. He did. His reply was short and merely said that he enclosed the essays the boys had written after seeing the film. He could not have done more for me had he replied at great length.

The results are so instructive that I strongly recommend the method to anyone who wants to find the snags in an educational film. My film clearly failed to convey the presented facts to some of the boys; I realised that my earlier critics had been right. Its arrangement is clear to adults, but the logical sequence has been displaced for purpose of emphasis.

In consequence, some boys mistook the finished product in the film for the dross; others *vice versa*. Again, some mistook operations, which necessarily took place at low levels, to have been on the tops of hills. Water used for washing out fine particles was mistakenly believed to have been used for softening purposes. In the words of one boy, "the picture was very good but not explained too well."

This brings home convincingly that a film for classroom use must present a perfectly plain statement in full and logical sequence.

These essays were very instructive in another direction in that they show what may take a boy's fancy. The picture included a short sequence of a ship being loaded and leaving dock. Nearly every essay mentions this. Says one lad: "The part which showed the port is most interesting," and another: "It would have been better if they had shown you more ships." Yet another, "It was good where the lorries were unloading."

One was fascinated by the capstan, "four pieces of wood in cross fashion" and gave the number of men turning it. Many boys mention the actual name of the ship and some, the Dutch port of origin.

The essays also disclosed failures in individual shots. A man's hand is seen passing slowly to and fro over a surface to demonstrate its polish. The previous title refers to the polish, but one boy missed the

Cine Causerie

By "CINNAMON"

import, saying: "A man was going over it with his hand." Another comment was: "A man was shovelling but I do not know what he was doing it for." This refers to a very short continuity shot which was inserted after the shipping to bring the mind back to the stone and its uses.

Another young essayist complains that the picture does not show how long a certain process took and yet another, that "the film does not show the picture as long as the writing." This is a considerable exaggeration, but is a warning against over titling. Do the accustomed talkies cause boys to regard titles as something superfluous? But the film cannot be blamed for the comment: "They get a hundred thousand tons out, but I would like to know why half this goes to America."

Nor do the youthful critics spare the photography. The open air shots are deliberately light in tone, and the copying exaggerated this. "The photography was too light" say two of the lads, or, as another puts it, "The man who filmed it got too much in the sun." Perhaps he did, for I waited the best part of a fortnight before I got the sunlight I wanted.

Appreciation of the purpose of the film is expressed in curious ways: "Before I saw this film I did not know that this stone was obtained in this way." Again, "The picture was interesting because I always wanted to know how the stone was obtained." On the other hand, "The film was not very enjoyable to me but all the same it learned me a lot." Nearly every boy attempts an appraisal, as though he were expected to criticise; "very good," "in some places it was not clear," "I liked parts of it," "on the whole the film was alright." But to assess your film as others see it, read the comment: "The picture was very interesting and some parts were awful."

Altogether the comment of these boys makes humbling reading but gives instructive guidance in the making of a classroom film, particularly as to what to include and what to avoid. To those who want further guidance I would strongly recommend the "Report on the principles governing the production of educational films" prepared for the Scottish Film Council and published by the University of London Press Ltd. at 1/-. (This was reviewed at some length in the Nov., 1940 issue of A.C.W.)

Mephisto and Faust travel
through the clouds on the
mantle.

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“Faust”

A Critical Commentary by
H. A. V. BULLEID, M.A.



FAUST was the culmination of the fantasy element in the German cinema, the final triumph of pictorial beauty and design, whose famous forerunners were *Caligari*, *Destiny*, *Siegfried*, *Cinderella*, etc. It was also the last work in Germany of Jannings and of its director, F. W. Murnau, who had won fame with the title-less *The Last Laugh*, and the stylishly perfect *Tartuffe*. (The former is now available from the British Film Institute Library, 8 reels 16mm.).

Murnau in Hollywood made *Sunrise* with Janet Gaynor and George O'Brien, Fox film, photographed by Charles Roscher, an ace cameraman who was Mary Pickford's cameraman in the 1919 period and onwards and who spent some months with UFA about 1925: this was probably Murnau's insistence, but Roscher was no Freund and the film was hokum. After *Four Devils* and one other production, Murnau collaborated with Robert Flaherty on *Tabu*: and then met an untimely death in a car smash.

Camilla Horn also went to Hollywood, but never achieved great fame. Gosta Ekman was a Swedish player, a fine actor: Yvette Guilbert was of the stage, a star in opera. Rohrig and Herlth's design, of atmospheric and pictorial perfection, ranks with their work on *Tartuffe* and *The Wonderful Lie*.

Production ..	UFA, Berlin, 1926.
Trade Review ..	January 6th, 1927. Distributed by Wardour.
English Release ..	January 9th, 1928.
Length ..	6,500 feet.
Directed by ..	F. W. Murnau.
Scenario ..	Hans Kyser.
Photography ..	Karl Freund.
Design ..	Walther Rohrig, Robert Herlth.

Players :

Emil Jannings	as Mephistopheles.
Gosta Ekman	as Faust.
Camilla Horn	as Marguerite.
Yvette Guilbert	as Marguerite's Aunt.
Substandard availability ..	Pathescope Library, 4 SB reels of 9.5mm., equivalent to 3,000 feet of 35mm.

Scenarist Hans Kyser, whose work is the least accomplished phase in *Faust*, later directed the sensational but filmically negligible *Martin Luther*. After *Faust*, the German cinema slid, with the exception of work by Fritz Lang and G. W. Pabst, into a mere imitation of Hollywood.

* * *

The legendary and operatic fame of *Faust* inevitably led it to be taken up as a film subject. In 1905 George Méliès made a one-reel version for Pathé: in 1921 a feature length version was directed, also in France, by Marcel l'Herbier. In opera the narrative is quite unimportant: *how* it is expressed is what matters, not *what* is expressed. In fact, Gounod's opera merely uses the theme of Goethe's dramatic poem, as does Murnau's film. Accordingly, it is unreasonable to expect any connection in narrative arrangement between opera and film. Also, there is no reason whatever to expect any of the opera music to be suitable as an accompaniment to the film; and in fact it was not suitable (with the exception of parts of the ballet music) even when expertly conducted by Sir Landon Ronald at the film's premiere at the Albert Hall.

The theme is clear-cut: Man sells himself to the devil for earthly power and pleasure, the end being inevitably tragic.

The film treatment is briefly as follows:—

PROLOGUE . . . An angel challenges Mephistopheles to turn a good man away from God.

NARRATIVE . . . Pestilence overshadows a city and defeats the skill of Dr. Faust. In despair he calls on the devil, but has to sign his name to a document, formally renouncing God, after which he gets power which avails nothing as the people stone him when he recoils from a crucifix. The devil then offers Youth, and himself dons a younger body to accompany Faust on a journey of pleasure. They visit a famous beauty whose consort Mephistopheles murders and who is surrendered into Faust's arms while the devil's power is shown by an hour-glass symbol.

Returning to his own country, Faust sees and at once falls in love with the beautiful and innocent Marguerite. Mephistopheles makes facetious overtures to her aunt and contrives her seduction by Faust and the death of her mother; and then baits



A. From without. Marguerite resists. B. From within. Faust prevails.
Gosta Ekman and Camilla Horn.

her soldier brother who dashes to the house and fights the duel during which Mephistopheles stabs him in the back and then cries 'murder' and makes a getaway with Faust.

Marguerite, publicly shamed, wanders away, deserted; her baby dies of exposure; she is condemned to be burned at the stake: but she desperately calls on Faust and he, now realising the devil's machinations and refuting him, returns to her, aged again but recognised, and they are reunited amid the flames.

EPILOGUE . . . The angel wins his challenge, and accepts Faust because . . . "since, in the depths of his heart this man kept faith, he belongs to God."

Viewed without bias, the narrative is revealed to be fundamentally banal and worthless; it is, in fact, almost identical with the old favourite of the movies, that of the philandering young millionaire who does wrong by the poor little girl but atones in the last reel owing to his aged mother's death, or to being rescued from death, etc. The value of the film under discussion will be found, therefore, not in the narrative but in the asides, the acting, the directorial construction and the design and photography. The prologue and epilogue are so banal and crudely obvious that the above resumé of their content will suffice.

* * *

The film proper opens with a distant shot of a small mediaeval town, over which there fades a black pall, the giant, black-winged figure of Mephistopheles. Cut to a telling shot of a horror-stricken woman amid hurrying forms, with a dark cross framing the foreground. Cut back to the devil's pall, spread further over the town. But unfortunately someone has superimposed "PESTILENCE!" over this, thereby spoiling the realism as well as the composition of the picture. The excellently arranged and memorable shot is a double print of the model town and the winged Emil Jannings: negative-positive makes this type of effect easy. Then—a fine example of the correct filmic portrayal of the *general* by showing the *particular*—a girl dashes wildly up the stair to Dr. Faust's room . . .

- (a) L.S. She dashes up the stair . . .
- (b) M.S. . . . hammers on his door . . .
- (c) L.S. (interior) He opens: she falls at his feet. (Superimposed title

"Doctor, my mother is dying!") MIX TO
(d) C.M.S. They are with the sick woman: the girl steals away . . .

(e) C.S. The woman: Faust's hand pours medicine into her mouth . . .

(f) C.M.S. She clutches him: falls back, dead. He casts down the phial . . .

(g) C.S. . . . it shatters on the floor.

(h) C.M.S. He gets to his feet, wild with anxiety, comes through the door, and opens it: the daughter can be seen through it; she approaches, wild with anxiety, comes through, looks towards the bed, cries out and . . .

(i) C.S. . . . throws herself down by her mother.

These shots are most beautifully conceived and executed, except (g) wherein too sharp a focus isolates the shot and over-emphasises what was already obvious. It is an axiom that a *change* of light-tone or of focus sharpness emphasizes the shot concerned, but this effect needs careful (and not too frequent) application. Shot (a) shows a fine set, with a view of church and other roofs in the background. (b) is reminiscent of Brigitte Helm's frenzied knocking on the door in *Metropolis* (same cameraman) in arrangement, but, of course, quite different in direction, lacking (appropriately) the Langish touch.

(c) As the girl bows her head it comes behind the "dy" of "dying!" This may be a new Art Form, but it is too abstruse for the present writer, who is also unable to explain the significance of the exclamation mark with which this and many other of the dialogue titles are burdened. (e) and (f) are subtly lit, with a hint of the shades of death. (i) is a dramatic use of background action. And again in (j) light is applied with skill, the face of the dead woman being gruesomely dark.

In despair, Faust burns his learned tomes: but one bursts open and reveals instructions for invoking the Devil.

At a sinister cross-roads, with a gnarled tree as grim sentinel and dim mists lit by the full moon (another beautiful studio set), Faust calls upon the Devil. Clouds obscure the moon: a great wind arises; a circle of livid fire surrounds him; in the black sky appears the Devil's chariot. Lightning rends the sky, a ball of fire drops. As the flames die away, there is revealed a queer figure, seated on a mound. Faust staggers to his

feet: the Devil gravely doffs his skull-cap.

Frightened, Faust hurries away, and as the Devil looks round after him, his eyes shine horribly white . . . Among the superb touches in the above sequence are the buffeting wind, the smoking light (remains of fire ball) serving to back-light the Devil, and the horribly shining eye.

The idea "inescapable" is powerfully expressed. (As Faust proceeded home, at every corner the Devil appeared, eyeing him. This sequence has unfortunately been cut). Then into an empty long shot of Faust's room there fades the Devil's sinister form, seated at the table: and as Faust throws open his door, we see the dreaded form over his shoulder. A close-up reveals the skill of Jannings's make-up, slightly recalling the aged convict in *Vaudeville*, though here the eyes are devil's eyes.

Playing on his desire to help the sick, symbolised by a detail shot of suppliant hands, Faust is persuaded to sign the parchment renouncing God—using the Devil's black quill, a witty touch. Then he walks out to the sick while the Devil, with a triumphant flourish, rolls up the parchment, in a mid-shot which is an individual triumph of superlatively brilliant acting by Jannings. Outside, Faust recoils from the crucifix held by a sick man, and the crowd stone him: so, in horror and despair, he returns to his room. The stones bounce absurdly, a ludicrous weakness redeemed by the effective detail of one stone splintering a wooden panel. From an alcove Faust takes a poison, and pours some out, but is stopped by the Devil, who causes to appear in the dark liquid his likeness as a young man: and Faust asks for Youth.

The Devil throws a covering over Faust, flames rise from it, and as they die down the covering is whipped away to reveal the youthful Faust in sharp, white profile, an excellent use of the tonal value of the shot for emphasis. And from the form of the old Devil steps a youthful, more soigné, shinily-black-robed Mephisto (as we feel we may now call him, with dangerous familiarity; so the direction subtly conveys). Mephisto waves away his old body, which moodily disappears—an extremely effective but simple double-exposure. Then, in another double-exposure which is actually a split-screen shot, Mephisto conjures up the form of a woman, again used symbolically.

To go out in search of further wonders, Mephisto spreads his mantle, and they stand on it; a great wind shatters the window; and in long shot they proceed out and up into the sky: this effect is a simple double exposure of the empty room, with dark area for the window, and a backward tracking

shot of the two on the mantle, against a dead black background (and in the teeth of the wind-machine). Their exhilarating journey is excellently shown, shots "from the air" of superb models and weird birds being inter-cut with mid and close shots of themselves, wind and vapour stirring them.

The rather clumsy Duchess of Parma sequence follows, with its huge set, decorated elephants, spectacular diamond, vicious murder by Mephisto of the consort, and reminder to Faust, by means of the hour-glass symbol and the recalled vision of age, that his youth is only on contract. An excellent touch is the immediate disappearance from Mephisto's hand of the hour-glass when Faust begs, yielding to temptation, "*Leave me Youth!*" This is simply done by stopping and restarting the camera, the actors keeping dead still during the removal of the hour-glass. A



*Sly and full of inimitable devilry—
Emil Jannings as Mephistopheles.*

hardly perceptible jerk occurs in this case.

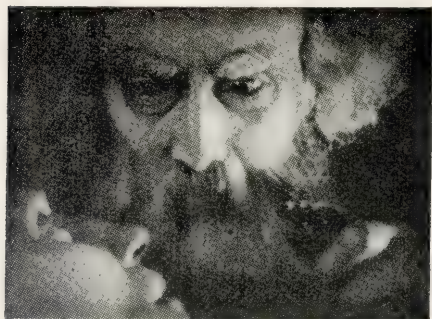
Much of the relevant detail at this part of the film occurs at the very top of the frame, and it is unfortunate that a part of the picture area has been lost in the reduction prints: thus, in the shot referred to, only the lower half of the hour-glass is seen, which will result in the effect being unnoticed by the less observant. Other losses are: part of the devil's chariot; and half of Jannings's head after the murder of the consort.

Against a back-projected background mixed to suit, and most effectively composed, Faust demands a return to his own country: where they duly appear in a beautifully designed exterior set, mingling with a well selected crowd, and discover it is Easter—a good example of choice of special environment to suit the action.

His recollections of childhood delight Faust: then one girl passes, alone: Mephisto makes a move that causes her to

drop her flowers—marguerites—which Faust picks up. The girl proceeds: Mephisto warns Faust from her, a ruse to increase his passion. He walks to the door of the church, and in close-up with shining eyes looks at Marguerite, standing at the back, a shaft of sunlight streaming across the church interior. The Blessing causes Mephisto to recoil and hide his face; and Faust also knows fear.

A really excellent pictorial composition introduces Marguerite and her mother at home: sunlight beams through the window, and the mother's chair is subtly emphasised in a way that adds power to a certain shot much later in the film, proving once again the need for pre-shooting planning by director - scenarist - cameraman - designer



Faust (Gosta Ekman) with a patient. Sombre lighting, fine composition, superb make-up.

(design of suitable chair, or alternatively choice thereof, if a specific period). In this case a low angle is employed which allows a diagonal composition to be maintained throughout the action of the shot.

Marguerite's soldier brother returns from war, gives her a shawl, teases her; while Mephisto enters her room, and leaves a necklace on her dressing-table. When Marguerite enters the room she is conscious of a queer evil in the atmosphere, and flings wide the window—only to see Faust, as arranged by Mephisto. She shuts the window and, thrilled, spies the "present." It will be noticed how logically the cause-and-effect in the scenario are contrived: and the suggestion of an evil presence having been in the room is admirably put over by Camilla Horn's acting, assisted by mood lighting in the mid-shot concerned.

Marguerite shows the necklace to her comic Aunt Martha, but runs off at her suggestion that it's a sweetheart's gift, and joins a group of children at play: then, in a self-consciously composed shot seen through a patterned foreground of willow, Mephisto leads Faust to see them.

Aunt Martha is having a quiet drink when Mephisto butts in, and after a piece of polished gesturing, hands her a gift: the sublime drinking scene has unfortunately been cut. Even so, it is made clear that Aunt M. has supped with the devil . . . meanwhile Faust joins in the children's game, and catches Marguerite and kisses her: and the end of resistance to him is clearly expressed in one brilliant close-up. Another love-scene follows, in another garden nook, and Faust puts a ring on her finger.

That evening Marguerite is in her candle-lit bedroom, ready for bed; Mephisto urges Faust in . . . "I'll keep her brother away . . ." Then . . .

(a) M.S. Marguerite opens her window, leans back inhaling the air, then Faust appears in the opening: she sees him, slams the window . . .

(b) C.M.S. (exterior) He puts his hands on the leaded panes, pushes: they open slightly, and the disturbed girl can be seen. She slams the windows again . . .

(c) M.S. . . . but he presses them open again, and she retreats, leans against the wall, head bent.

The impact of these three shots is amazing, and their meaning concisely and implicitly conveyed. The lighting is perfect, as will be seen from the stills of each reproduced herewith.

Meanwhile, in a superb tavern set consisting mainly of two huge barrels and a curved ceiling, with a door high in one corner, Mephisto baits the brother with a toast "To Marguerite—and her lover!"; then blinds the company with a flash of fire to cover his getaway, after which the brother dashes out, brandishing his sword. (The substitution of "Margaret" for "Marguerite" throughout this version of the film dismays the present writer, although it can be supported academically).

Mephisto invokes a great wind, and the mother gets out of bed, and staggers across the passage to Marguerite's room, and after a struggle opens the door, which swings back at her: but she stands looking in horror into the room . . .

(a) C.S. Marguerite in shame covers her face with the bed-clothes . . .

(b) M.S. Her mother staggers back, collapses, her head striking the wall of the passage, and lies still. Marguerite runs to her.

FADE OUT

Again, two shots of amazing directorial power and narrative conciseness: the close-up in harsh focus, with Faust, dimly, immediately above; and the mid shot of tragic content, with a forceful diagonal composition.

The duel is fought in the circle of one spot-light; and Mephisto brutally kills the brother, snapping his sword. Their shadows on the pale house wall are used to add to the patterned composition of the acting. Then Mephisto shouts murder over the house-tops, in several picturesque shots over the

roofs: people are soon up and about with lamps: Faust, dazed, is dragged away as they arrive at the scene of the crime.

Through swirling smoke the Requiem Service is shown in sombre long shot: the choir chant piously: outside the church door, Marguerite sobs bitterly. Then out files the line of mourners, including Aunt Martha, enjoying a few pious tears. Marguerite approaches her, but is repulsed with a firm hand . . . for she is Guilty, and Aunt M. is a Good Woman (though she has supped with the devil . . .). In one last tragic long shot of the still, empty church, Marguerite in the foreground totters and collapses.

On release from the stocks, after expiation in face of a jeering crowd (more excellent types), Marguerite goes home to an empty house . . . she stands and looks at her mother's chair, and imagines her mother returned (indicated by double-exposure), and collapses sobbing—the last shot recalling that shot referred to at the mother's introduction.

The action then moves on nine months from Easter to Christmas, and after a picturesque long shot with falling snow we are treated to the banal and sickly touch of mixing from a shot of carol-singers to a shot of Marguerite with baby in roofless shed. Super-imposed titles shriek a redundant explanation of what had better been left unsaid.

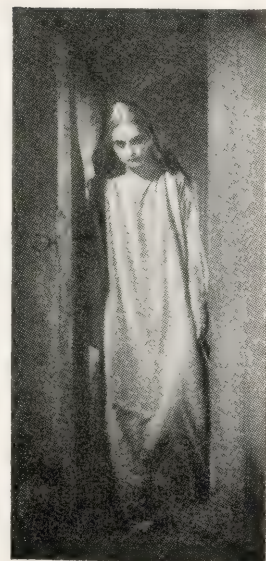
Bearing "her precious burden" and proceeding "we know not whither," Marguerite staggers across a snowy waste and collapses by a broken fence: her overwrought mind pictures a little cot with candles (superimposed) into which she places the babe: then a party of men find her and the dead child and arrest her. The sentimentality of these scenes defeats their admirable cinematic technique, and reveals the one weakness of F. W. Murnau.

Marguerite's despairing cry to Faust is conveyed pictorially by close-ups superimposed on vague, misty tracking shots mixing to a long shot of

Faust in distant country: and he gets the message and bitterly curses Mephisto.

Marguerite in her prison cell thinks back to the romantic garden, shown by a dissolve based on similarity of form but contrasted environment, and again collapses. Abbreviations in this version serve to make her three collapses, coming within a space of about 8 minutes on the screen, rather ludicrous.

Mephisto, who had held the aged Faust in a mirror, now again produces this and robs him of Youth: transported to the scene of Marguerite's execution, he forces his way past the guards and ascends the pyre to be by her side: close-ups of his youthful face and aged face, dissolved, reveal him to her, and a smile transfigures her. Hazily, through the rising flames they kiss—he young again—and the shot dissolves into a cloudy sky, into the epilogue.



Mood-lighting and pose . . .
DESPAIR.



Mood-lighting and pose . . .
DELIGHT.

* * *

F. W. Murnau's direction is artistic, considered, profound. His handling of the film up to the Parma incident seldom wavers from unobtrusive perfection: the moulding together of the acting, narrative, camera and design phases is remarkable. Later this unity breaks down, the scenario being chiefly at fault: and unfortunately Murnau suffered from a leaning towards sentimentality which this scenario fostered. This is noticeable in incident (ghostly mother and cradle) and in detail (too many sunbeams in church, too many flowers in garden) and occasionally in atmosphere (the child born at Noël).

There are also occasional technical lapses, such as incorrect camera angles at the final scene, when the youthful image of Faust should have been seen *subjectively*, i.e., through Marguerite's eyes. On the other hand, there are cases of absolute technical perfection, such as the window scene in the bedroom.

Another scenario weakness lies in the



Mephisto charms Aunt Martha (Emil Jannings and Yvette Guilbert).

disposal of the characters' appearances: thus, Marguerite only appears about half-way through, and both Mephisto and Faust practically disappear in the last reel; though this has been aggravated in the abbreviated version available. This fact also puts excessive demands on the personality and acting of Camilla Horn, who had to take over a screen that had been held by the supreme artistry of Jannings. Further, she

had to portray dreary misery, as opposed to the double-edged Devil.

Murnau as director has brought out the best facets of the Jannings' acting: and must also probably be credited with the three good recurring basic effects, which assist in welding the film together: namely, the *wind* motif (cross-roads . . . journey on mantle . . . seduction . . . snow scene), the *smoke* and *fire* motif (Faust's room . . . cross-roads . . . Youth . . . Parma . . . tavern . . . second church scene . . . final scene: also prologue and epilogue), and the unifying element of the devil's trickery, both straight-forward (drawer opens itself) and symbolic (aged Faust preserved in mirror).

In Murnau's next film, *Sunrise*, in spite of the assistance of a famous scenarist in Karl Mayer (who did *Caligari*, *The Last Laugh* and *Tartuffe*) hokum sentimentality won the day. It was tragic that one weakness should have caused a really great director to deviate from what might have been a unique advancement in technique.

The photography of Karl Freund lacks the unadorned perfection of *Vaudeville*, but is of unique compositional purity and never fails to portray the mood of the sequence.

Faust has memorable moments: and the inimitable stamp of Murnau, Jannings and Freund, ensure its place in the archives of Cinema.

Adapting the 200B for Sound (Continued)

By now we have arrived at a stage where the sound track in the sound gate can be strongly illuminated by the exciter lamp and we now require to project the sound track image. This is accomplished by means of a standard projection lens, e.g., the lens of the 200B (32mm.) can be used for experimenting. The method of supporting the lens is shown in Fig. 1. It is supported in a U shaped clamp of $\frac{1}{8}$ " brass which is closed by a 2BA bolt and milled nut, the latter enabling the lens to be moved easily for focussing. The lens mount is then bolted on to an extension piece attached to the side of the projector.

In order to keep the lens rigid this was made in $\frac{1}{8}$ " brass shaped as in Fig. 1 and bolted to the projector by two 2BA nuts and bolts 1 and 2. Bolt No. 2 also carries a right-angled bracket about $\frac{1}{2}$ " x $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 1", covered with a velvet sleeve. The film passes under this before going to the take-up reel. This is necessary with 9.5mm. sound films as they are projected with the emulsion away from the screen, and the rotation of the reels must be reversed by removing the cross-over in the spring belts on the take-off and

take-up arms. If the brackets are not used the film will come in contact with the sprocket guides in its path to the reels and will probably be scratched. This is particularly so with 900 ft. reels. For the same reason a similar bracket must also be made to fix below the take-off reel.

This completes the description of the mechanical and optical sections of the sound head. In use it will be found that quite a length of the track is projected on to the photo cell unit: this does not matter and is, indeed, essential since any slight vertical tilt of the projector will not throw the track image off the slit in the cell unit, as would be the case if only a narrow band of the sound track were projected. Of course, it will not prevent the image moving off the slit due to any lateral movement of the projector, which should therefore be supported on a solid table.

It will be noted that no damping is employed on the film feed to the sound gate as it was not found necessary, there being almost complete absence of flutter even with very slight tension between the pressure pad and sound gate.

DO IT YOURSELF!

practical ideas for the handyman

The "Chest-i-Pod"

In each issue our contributor supplies worth-while ideas: things to make and things to do. Suggestions for gadgets are welcomed.

By G. A. GAULD, B.Sc.

THE photograph, Fig. 1, was intended to show the use, not only of the direct camera sight described in these pages last month but, in addition, a gadget for steadying the camera when hand-held. Taking liberties with the trade names of a well known manufacturer, I shall call it a "Chest-i-Pod."

As my small son was the photographer, it was discovered, too late, that nothing could be seen of the device save the tail end of the leather strap passing round my neck. Nevertheless, it may be noticed that the weight of the camera is not carried by my hands; they merely steady the camera, leaving my first finger free to operate the trigger. The weight is actually borne on my chest by the "Chest-i-Pod," shown in the photograph, Fig. 2 and detailed in Fig. 3.

It consists of a bracket, supported on the

tripod. On a hundred and one occasions, such as sports or race meetings where rapid changes of viewpoint are required, it becomes an invaluable accessory.

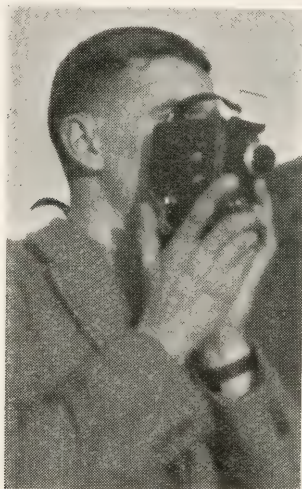
The various parts required to form the bracket are shown dissected in Fig. 3. The back plate is cut out of sheet brass $\frac{1}{16}$ " thick, and strips of the same sheet or thick brass wire may be used for the clips to which the leather strap is fixed. Notches to take the legs of these clips are cut into the back plate. The notches and ends of the clips are "tinned" with ordinary solder and sweated in with the iron. This makes a good strong joint, the surplus solder being removed with a file.

The bracket is cut out of the same material and bent to shape. Two tongues are formed on the bottom edge and pass through corresponding holes drilled in the back plate. The ends of the tongues are then rivetted over. The portion containing the socket should be about half an inch square and a quarter of an inch thick. Holes are drilled through and two long rivets secure the whole to the back plate. The socket itself is formed by simply drilling a $\frac{5}{16}$ " diameter hole about halfway through. The bottom of the hole will be cone-shaped if an ordinary twist drill is used, and this will provide an ideal bearing for the rod which is attached to the camera. A coat of good black lacquer completes the job, and the straps are sewn on.

I say 'straps,' because a buckle should be fitted to provide adjustment. The camera, on the supporting rod, should rest easily against the cameraman's face, with the viewfinder sight at his natural eye level. With elbows pressed well into the sides and the hands lightly gripping the camera on each side, it should be possible to hold it almost as steady as the proverbial rock.

Now I do not wish readers to think that this gadget is an excuse for dispensing with a tripod. That is *not* the case and I am entirely in agreement with the good advice given many times in the pages of this magazine that a tripod should be used on every possible occasion. In this connection, we are also frequently told that the use of tripod is imperative with telephoto lens but I do not

Fig. 1. The "Chest-i-Pod," described in this article, in use. Note the direct sights on the camera, described in last month's "Do It Yourself."



cameraman's chest by a leather strap passing round his neck. A brass rod, about 10" long and $\frac{5}{16}$ " diameter, is shouldered down at one end and screwed $\frac{1}{4}$ " Whit. to fit the tripod bush on the camera. This is screwed into the camera. The other end is rounded off and fits freely into a corresponding socket in the bracket.

With legs braced well apart, or supporting himself by leaning against a wall or fence, and using this gadget, the cameraman can take pictures comparable in steadiness with those taken with the camera mounted on a

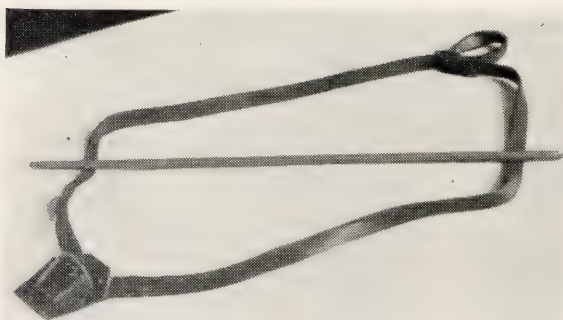


Fig. 2. The "Chest-i-Pod," a simple but useful gadget.

recollect that anyone has taken the trouble to explain why. For the sake of beginners, therefore, let us look into this question a little more closely.

Let us consider first of all, a camera fitted with a standard one inch lens. This may be represented by a simple lens, as shown in Fig. 4, the centre point of this lens being indicated by P, equivalent to the centre point of the combination of lenses which go to form the normal camera lens. All rays passing through the lens may therefore be considered as passing through this point if a small stop is used. This assumption is made for simplicity only, the underlying principle being the same whatever stop is used.

Next consider a ray of light coming from an object "X" at a distance "D" from the lens (always measured from the centre of the lens). This will form an image X' on the gate at a distance "d". This distance varies from one inch, when the object is at infinity, to a distance somewhat greater as the object approaches the camera.

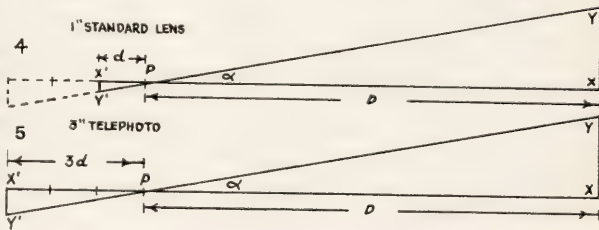
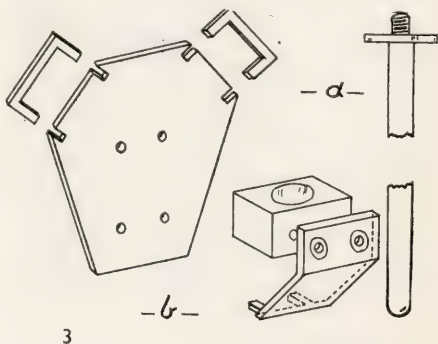
In Fig. 5, the same conditions are shown with a three inch telephoto lens in place of the original lens of one inch focal length. If the distance "D" is kept the same, again measured from the optical centre of the lens combination, the image of the object X will be formed on the gate but at a distance of exactly three times that of the corresponding distance given by the one inch lens. In other words, the distance P-X' in the case of the telephoto lens is equal to 3 times "d," or 3d.

Next, imagine that the object moves a fixed distance at right angles to the optical axis to a new position "Y". The ray of light proceeding from this new position to the centre of the lens we shall assume to make an angle " α " with the original ray from X, and it will pass through the lens and

form its corresponding image on the gate at Y'. If you recollect your school geometry and the simple laws governing similar triangles, it will be obvious that the displacement of the image in the case of the telephoto lens is exactly three times the displacement given by the one inch lens. That is to say, the distance X'-Y' in Fig. 5 is three times the distance X'-Y' in Fig. 4.

Now, if instead of moving the object "X," we twist the camera through an angle " α " the effect will be precisely the same. The image on the gate will move from X' to Y' and again, this movement will be three times as great in the case of the telephoto.

A wobbling camera, held in the hand, presents exactly similar conditions; the camera is constantly being twisted through varying angles, alpha, beta, gamma, delta and all the rest of them. Consequently the amount of camera shake transmitted to the film is directly proportional to the magnifying power of the telephoto lens in use. The greater the focal length or magnification of the telephoto, the greater the need for a rigid support.



The period settings in "The Strawberry Blonde" are well done, as witness this shot from the film, which features James Cagney and Olivia de Havilland.

Best of the Bunch

Some Notes on Current Film Releases

WHEN I turn back through the pages of old copies of the magazine, "Close-Up," as I often do, I cannot help reflecting what a glorious decade the intelligent cinemagoer of the twenties lived through.

Vaudeville, *The Last Laugh*, *The Atonement* of Gosta Berling, *Ben Hur*, *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*, *The Gold Rush*, *Metropolis*, *Moana*, *Orphans of the Storm*, *The Thief of Baghdad* . . . these and many another were going round the ordinary cinemas, to say nothing of the wealth of outstanding material shown month after month by the London Film Society and its provincial replicas, foremost among it the best work of Eisenstein and Pudovkin. That surely was the golden age of filmgoing. Is it merely that distance lends enchantment to the view, and that the early forties, when remembered twenty years hence, will seem equally privileged? I can scarcely believe so.

When the shadow of war falls over so much of the world, the cinema can perhaps hardly hope to escape its sterile coldness. Only America among the great producing countries is not in active war, but even America appears to suffer from the absence of invigorating example and influence elsewhere. The progress of the cinema, like peace, appears to be indivisible.

Do not misunderstand me. I do not mean that there is a complete dearth of good entertainment. Among this month's releases, for example, there are at least four films which you will enjoy, and at the rate of one a week, that's not bad going. They may not get you out of your seat with excitement, but they are not likely to get you out of it with annoyance, either.



First of all there is *Jeannie*, directed by Harold French, the film version of a play which has had a very successful West End run. Barbara Mullen plays the part of a Scots lass whose home life has been so full of drabness and drudgery that when her father dies and leaves her £297 she decides to spend the whole lot in a luxurious holiday in Vienna—a plan which she carries out so completely that what she planned to be a month's trip has to be cut short at the end of a week.

The direction is straightforward. The sets, lighting and photography, and other technical desiderata are very competently done. The original stage-play form is effectively disguised by frequent changes of scene. The one thing which betrays its source is the reliance on dialogue. Thus, although the scenes are changed, and a certain amount of action is introduced, the action fails to have dramatic significance. Nearly always the important thing is the dialogue: and the chief interest lies in the characterisation as it is expressed through it.

Both Barbara Mullen and Michael Redgrave give entertaining performances, and are adequately supported (although Wilfrid Lawson, who makes a brief appearance as Jeannie's father, has done much better in some of his previous minor roles). But by far the most effective portrait is that of the Count, played by Albert Lieven. It seemed

By

ERNEST H. LINDGREN

(Curator, National Film Library)



A stirring shot from "Forty Thousand Horsemen," Australian film about Australian actions in the Middle East in the last war.

to me, however, that all the principal characters suffered from one weakness—they were too single minded, and lacked roundness. The Yorkshireman was always persistence personified, the Count always pursuing his fortune under a veil of consummate *politesse*, Jeannie always the same mixture of naivete and thrifty common-sense. One caught no glimpse of any other interests in their lives. Even Mr. Deeds, you remember, had his tuba.

Those to whom these drawing-room comedies have little appeal, and who thirst for adventure, will find plenty to their taste in *Forty Thousand Horsemen*. The chief interest of this film lies in the fact that it comes from Australia. Australian films have generally not reached the standards we are accustomed to: on the whole they tend to have a curiously naive quality, although this is not entirely without its attraction. This film, however, is (as far as my experience goes) the best Australia has yet sent us. It is a film of the last War, but a change from previous American and British films on the subject, which have usually been set on the Western front. This deals with Australian actions in the Middle East, and thus gains additional interest by its topicality at the present time.

The story is highly romanticised in the best B.O.P. style, but within their limits the scenes have a stirring atmosphere of realism. One feels that the director, Charles Chauvel, must have worked with some sense of making an epic of Australian history. There are some particularly effective shots of cavalry crossing the desert and of battle charges.

dentist, Biff Grimes, who is visited by a patient with toothache, Hugo Bamstead. He recognises Hugo as a man who wronged him ten years before.

At that time Hugo and Biff courted the same girl, but Hugo won her. Biff suffers other misfortunes, too, and the girl persuades Hugo to take him into his business. He does so, but makes him the innocent cover for his fraudulent mismanagement. For this Biff is arrested and sent to prison, where he is able to study dentistry and gain his diploma. Now, with Hugo in his dentist's chair, and thus in his power, the temptation to revenge himself becomes almost too strong to resist. Shall he give him an overdose of gas? I think you will find the film an interesting example of narrative told in retrospect, and quite adroitly unfolded.

Finally among our select list of four is *Love Crazy*, an M-G-M film directed by Jack Conway and exploiting the William Powell-Myrna Loy partnership. If you have seen *The Thin Man*, *After the Thin Man*, *Double Wedding* and the rest you will know what to expect. Here, to the time-tested mixture of witty dialogue and crazy humour, has been added pure farce in the Charley's Aunt vein.

When William Powell drifts into misunderstandings with his wife, and she seeks a divorce, he attempts to play for time by feigning lunacy. To his astonishment he is, in fact, certified and is removed to an asylum. He escapes and manages to elude recapture by posing as his own sister, until the whole complication is happily unravelled.

Some may find objection in principle to the fun made of lunacy, but the great majority

will simply accept it all for the good-natured frolic it is meant to be. On the structural side, the story is somewhat unnecessarily drawn-out, and the obvious ending is too long deferred, with a consequent weakening of climax.

Repent at Leisure, directed by Frank Woodruff, with Wendy Barrie, Kent Taylor and George Barbier, does not rank with our first four, but it is what the film trade would, I suppose, call a good second-class feature. It is the story of an ambitious store employee, who accidentally meets and marries his employer's daughter but without knowing her real identity, which she wishes to keep secret.

Quite the funniest scene in what is otherwise only a mildly amusing film shows the peak of cut-throat competition between two rival stores. One decides to sell good umbrellas cheaply, simply to attract customers into the shop, in the hope that they will buy other goods to make up the loss. When this umbrellas sale is at the height of its success, the other store decides to send out its employees to buy up the umbrellas and bring them back to be sold at a still lower price. The first one retaliates in kind, and so on. The prices of umbrellas drop and drop, and in the final *reductio ad absurdum* of the whole process, the employees of each firm are seen marching in two opposing processions, all of them grasping umbrellas.

In recent days I have also viewed the new Marx Brothers' film, *Big Store*, which will presumably be released in the near future, although the actual date has not yet been announced. As a Marx fan myself, I must say I was disappointed. It has little that is new, and is definitely below their usual standard. The one redeeming feature is a glorious chase at the end.

But if this month you want imagination, originality, a resourceful use of technical possibilities, I can only shrug my shoulders. I am reminded of the quite irrelevant interest aroused by one shot in *The Flame of New Orleans*, in which Bruce Cabot in his ship's cabin picked up a large succulent apple, crunched one or two juicy bites from it, and then carelessly threw the rest away. An audible buzz of excitement stirred through the whole audience.

Likewise, some occasional and incidental felicity of angle in a shot, some almost accidental nicety of cutting, may serve to recall a glory which has all but departed, and to remind us that real imagination in film-making, like fine apples and bananas and onions, is "in short supply." In other words, there is scarcely a hope we shall see any more this side of the peace.

Home Processing of Agfacolor

Although it is possible to get Agfacolor processed as monochrome, no trade house will now undertake to process it in colour. By the method below, the work can be done at home and, as our test reel shows, excellent results secured.

By C. LESLIE THOMPSON, B.Sc.

THE following method has been almost entirely developed by trial-and-error experiment, and may bear only slight resemblance to that employed by the makers of the material, who have never released their process.

OUTLINE

The film is first developed in a vigorous M-Q solvent developer, and stopped at the correct time with weak acid. Re-exposure to strong light follows, and the residual silver salts are reduced in a special developer, which simultaneously combines with dye-formers in the emulsion to give a positive dye-image. This process also is stopped at the correct stage with weak acid. The silver produced by the two developments is then removed, in two stages, leaving the final image, composed solely of dyes.

MATERIALS AND APPARATUS

With one exception, all the reagents are in common photographic use, and can be readily obtained from dealers or chemists. The exception, which will have to be specially ordered through a chemist or scientific supply house, is the "colour coupler"—Di-Ethyl-para-Phenylene - Diamine - Monohydrochloride, or Di-E-P.P.D.-HCl, among friends. This chemical is catalogued at about 4/- per oz., or 1/6 per 10 grammes, but is somewhat scarce at present. Substitutes, in case of difficulty, are either the Di-Methyl- salt, or the -Sulphate (Di-Methyl may not give such accurate colour-balance. The Sulphate, while giving excellent results, is almost insoluble in water, and should first be dissolved in a little methyl alcohol.)

A developing-frame of the cylindrical type is required, as the film must not be under uneven strain during the process. Both the skeleton-drum and the rectangular-frame types are unsuitable, as the comparatively sharp bends cause uneven development, with consequent flashes every few inches.

The dish or trough should be capable of rapid emptying and refilling, or, better still, two dishes or troughs will greatly simplify the accurate timing required, as explained later.

A simple, home-made drum of suitable type is shown in the photograph. This drum, 10" long by 9" diameter, takes 25 feet of film, and can be supported at two levels by the vertical pieces—the two notches can be seen quite clearly. In use, a 10" x 8" developing dish is placed on the base, and the axle rests in the lower pair of notches. With this arrangement, 500 cc. of solution are just sufficient, but for most baths a litre is more satisfactory.

For those who do not wish to construct their own drums, or are fortunate enough to possess one already, the Todd Tank is very suitable. Small variations from the procedure described will be involved, but these are obvious and straightforward. Liberal quantities of the stop-baths, and of rinsing-water are recommended, however.

A fair-sized sink is a great help for the rinses and final washing, and saves the need for frequent changes of water in the dish.

FIRST DEVELOPMENT

This is by far the most important step in the whole process, since the colour-balance, contrast, and density of the final image all depend directly upon it. Accuracy of composition and correct timing are therefore essential. A vigorous-working formula is required, and the one recommended is based on formulae devised by P. K. Turner. The proportions given seem to produce the best colour-balance and contrast.

STOP BATHS

In both cases these consist of 1% Acetic Acid, which is sufficiently strong to arrest the developers, but not to injure the dyes or dye-formers. A good rinse is essential after each stop-bath, since the succeeding baths would be partially destroyed by free acid.

RE-EXPOSURE

May be conveniently performed with a Photoflood bulb, held about 6" from the film, allowing approximately one second for each foot of film treated. (E.g., a drum with 25 feet of film is rotated steadily while the lamp is slowly moved along its length during half a minute).

COLOUR-COUPLER

As this is made up immediately before use, there is no need for "preservative" in the formula, especially as this tends to reduce the brilliance of the dyes. Conveniently, the alkali may be kept in concentrated solution, diluted at time of use, and the Di-E-P.P.D.-HCl stirred in immediately before immersing the film. It is important that sufficient of this reagent be employed, and 1 grm. per 25 feet of film is required.

REMOVAL OF SILVER

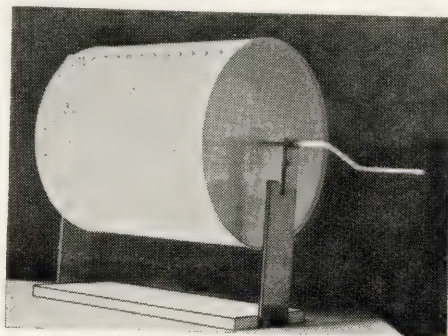
The commoner silver-solvents ("reducers") are either painfully slow, or injurious to the dyes. By performing the operation in two

stages, the time may be greatly reduced, with perfect safety. The silver is first converted to a halide (Chloride or Bromide), and then dissolved in plain hypo. ("Acid" and "Hardening" components destroy the dyes).

PROCEDURE

The formulae and times are given at the end of this account, but possibly a brief description of the writer's own technique may be helpful.

To begin with, the first developer and stop bath are made up in their respective dishes, and the temperature of the developer is checked just before turning out the light. In complete darkness the film is wound on



Simple home-made developing drum.
(See Col. 1.)

to the drum, which is then lowered into the developer. Simultaneously the timing clock, set to go off in four and three-quarter minutes, is started. The drum is kept rotating at about one turn per second. With the warning buzz, the drum is raised from the developer, the dish replaced by the stop-bath, and the drum lowered into this. The change over takes about 15 seconds, so that the film is actually 5 minutes "in developer." (In the case of the Todd Tank, or similar apparatus, the draining-time must be previously determined, and included in the five minutes). Once in the stop-bath, the drum is rotated rather more vigorously for a full minute, then the light can be turned on. (A dark-green safelight may be used during development, but if it is really safe it will be of little use, and a spot of rehearsal in light, with the eyes closed, is recommended).

The drum is now removed from its stand, and put in a basin of water, with water running. The drum floats in this, and is vigorously rotated for two minutes, then replaced on the stand. The film is left for a minute or so, while the dishes are rinsed, and colour-coupler and a fresh stop-bath are prepared.

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16mm. Victor, as above, but fitted with f/1.9 Laack lens, condition as new ... **£45 0 0**

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16mm. Bell & Howell Filmo Model 70, fitted f/3.5 fixed focus lens, variable speeds, tubular finder **£15 15 0**

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16mm. Model "H" Paillard-Bolex, lin. f/1.5 Dallmeyer "Speed" lens, turret head, self-threading gate, variable speeds, visual focussing, adjustable finder, hand crank and back wind, motor controlled single picture device, indistinguishable from new **£59 17 6**

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The drum is lowered into the colour-coupler, given one or two turns, then the Photoflood is switched on, and slowly scanned along the drum as it turns. The film of liquid on the emulsion ensures even exposure. During colour-coupling the margins of the film and the "shadow" parts of the image turn from a light pinky-grey to a dark khaki. At the end of 8 minutes, the coupler is replaced by the stop-bath. Again, rather more vigorous turning is given for $1\frac{1}{2}$ minutes, then the film is again washed in running water for 2 minutes.

The two dishes are now filled with the Bleach and the Clear baths, which are kept made up in stock solutions at normal working strength. During the Bleach-bath the surface of the film lightens to a clean brownish-yellow, and the back of the film, at the end of the bath, is bright chalky-blue. After six minutes the back of the film is examined to make sure that all the backing (a dense layer of brown dye between emulsion and base) is destroyed. This occurs most slowly in areas under highlights, so that towards the end of the Bleach a "negative image" may be seen from the back. When this has completely disappeared, the film is transferred to the hypo (clearing) bath.

In the hypo the surface of the film gradually changes from brownish-yellow to "crimson-black," while the back loses its chalky appearance, and becomes "inky." When the chalkiness has disappeared, the film is ready for its final wash, which, in spite of great impatience, is continued for 15 minutes!

The simplest method of drying, when the space is available, is to hang the film from side to side of a room, wipe it with a viscose sponge, and leave it to dry with the minimum of disturbance.

FORMULAE AND TIMES

First Developer
Stock Solution

Hydroquinone	..	..	50 grm.
Metol	..	..	12.5 grm.
Sodium Sulphite (cryst.)	..	..	200 grm.
Potassium Bromide	..	..	25 grm.
Caustic Soda (dissolved in cold water before adding)	..	..	50 grm.
Water to	..	..	one litre

Working solution consists of 100 cc. of Stock plus 3.5 grm. of Potassium Thiocyanate (KCNS) per litre. (For those who already have stock solutions, the above is equivalent to 50 cc. "Latitude" plus 50 cc. "M-Q 65"). The Thiocyanate should only be added a few minutes before using. Use at $65-67^{\circ}$ for 5 minutes, timed to actual immersion in the stop-bath. (This formula gives brilliant gradation. If softer results are desired,

increase Metol to 25 grm.—giving "M-Q 65"—and reduce the time to $4\frac{1}{2}$ minutes).

Stop Bath

Glacial Acetic Acid	..	..	10 cc.
Water to	..	..	one litre

Temperature not important, allow to act for $1\frac{1}{2}$ minutes, with vigorous agitation.

Colour-Coupler

Diethyl-paraphenylene-diamine-HCl.
1 grm. or more
Sod. or Pot. Carbonate (Anhyd.) 20 grm.
Water to one litre
(Allow 1 grm. of the reagent per 25 ft. of film) 100 cc. of 20% Carbonate solution is a convenient measure. Used at $65-67^{\circ}$, for 8 mins.

Stop Bath

As before, but must be made up freshly.

Bleach-Bath

Potassium Ferricyanide	..	30 grm.
Pot. Bromide or Common Salt	..	15 grm.
Water to	..	one litre

Use at $60-65^{\circ}$, for approximately 6 mins. Determine end-point by examination.

Clearing-Bath

Hypo	..	..	200 grm.
Water to	..	..	one litre

Use at $60-65^{\circ}$, approx. $2\frac{1}{2}$ mins. Determine end-point by examination.

Both the Bleach and the Clear may be preserved for use again, and are good until the bleach turns green, or the hypo becomes very cloudy. Both these baths may be continued beyond the end-point with perfect safety.

Summary

First Development	5 mins.
Stop-Bath	$1\frac{1}{2}$ mins.
Wash	2 mins.—Change solutions
Colour-Coupling	8 mins.—Re-exposure at start
Stop-Bath	$1\frac{1}{2}$ mins.
Wash	2 mins.—Change solutions

Bleach	6 mins.
Clear	$2\frac{1}{2}$ mins.
Wash	15 mins.

Approximately 30 mins. actual processing, or $\frac{1}{2}$ hour of "handle-turning."

Where a large sink is not available, two changes of water, of one minute each, are sufficient for a rinse and five changes of three minutes each for the final washing.

FILMING THE GROWTH OF FLOWERS

We regret that, now that A.C.W. is to be published at quarterly intervals, we have had to suspend this series (the first article in which appeared last month). We shall, however, be glad to supply full instructions and diagrams to those readers who have made a start on the apparatus described,

DESIRABLE IMPROVEMENTS

Sir,—Your correspondent, Mr. Armstrong, in his list of improvements to the present day projector, omits one which I suggest would be very welcome to all "silent" projectionists, namely, a gear change from 16 to 24 frames per second when required. Very few people, I imagine, care to race their machine up to the higher speed when showing adapted "talkies," and there is nothing more dismal than watching what was intended to be an exciting incident taking place as if the characters were drugged.

A desirable improvement in certain cameras would be a pressure pad which really allowed access to the aperture and the guides. My 16mm. camera, although excellent in all other respects, has a gate which is hinged at the top, and which can only swing back a very short way before it is stopped by the sprocket assembly, making it impossible to see if the far side of the guide is quite clear. A gate which was ideal in this respect was that of the Pathe Motocamera de Luxe, which swung right back, leaving the whole path and aperture absolutely clear, and allowing of placing a piece of tracing paper so as to examine the image (which is one reason why I still retain my first 9.5mm camera of this make).

As regards the sticking of 9.5mm. film, I may have been extraordinarily fortunate; but only once (apart from initial inertia) did I have trouble of this kind, and then it turned out to be due to a mechanical defect, which was put right by Pathescope Ltd., while the charger went back without trouble. Actually, I consider that this confirms your contributor's theory on the cause of "sticking," as apart from one or two chargers bought on holiday, I have always obtained my film from the same dealer, who keeps it in a very cool cupboard at the back of the shop, so that it never gets hot and sticky.

May I, in conclusion, express the hope that you will include the "Tale of Greisshuus" in your series of "Famous Films"? (I think that I enjoy this series as much as anything in your paper, that is, of course, from the purely entertainment point of view, as distinct from the other and invaluable technical articles).

Kettering.

H. D. WILLIAMS.

STANDARDISED CUE SYSTEM

Sir,—With reference to 'Cinnamon's' notes in the August issue concerning a standardised cue system, may I outline my method of securing a change-over which is completely unnoticeable except to those who know what to look for. I trust that the idea may be of value to other readers.

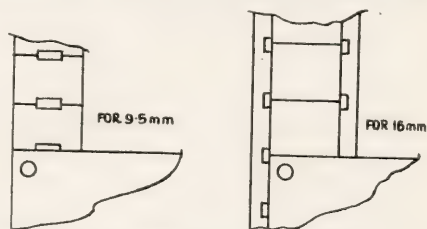
I have made a thin sheet of metal template

Letters to the Editor

The Editor is always glad to hear from readers, but does not necessarily endorse the views expressed.

with a $1/16"$ dia. hole in one corner, its centre being $3/32"$ from each edge. Next, a sewing needle with a not too sharp point is selected and the eye pushed into a small wooden handle by means of pliers. With these two simple gadgets it is a simple matter to affix to the ends of each reel cue marks which show up on the screen clearly enough for the operator, but which are no more noticeable to the audience than professional cue marks.

The metal template is held against the emulsion side of the film and the two edges placed, one on the frame separation line



Method of marking frames. (See letter in this column).

and the other against the edge of the film. This is for 9.5mm. For 16mm. the procedure is similar, the side being in line with the edge of the picture instead of the film. The sketch will make this clearer.

If the needle is carefully twirled round in the hole, a small circle of emulsion is flaked off. This is left white, if it occurs at a fade, or spotted in with black indian ink applied on the pointed end of a match, according to the background. The marks should be made in the top left hand corner so that when the film is being shown, they will appear in the top right hand corner of the screen, the emulsion side being then reversed in the gate.

For silent films four such marks are made on consecutive frames, starting with the sixth from the commencement of the 'end of part —' trailer and working away from it. Thirty-six frames are then counted off and a further four cue marks appended. For talkies the thirty-six should be increased to about fifty.

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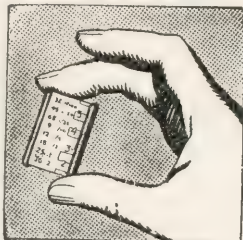
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mark a twelve reel programme in such a way. The time is well spent, for it is a positive and efficient way of changing over, and with very little practice can be achieved with professional neatness. The template ensures that the cue mark remains stationary for the second or two it stays on the screen and does not dither about all over the picture area.

I use two Pathe 200B Plus projectors and find that the next reel should be threaded with about six frames to go before the first picture reaches the gate—but this is largely a matter of experience, as some machines attain full speed quicker than others. It will be found advantageous to mount the lamp and motor switches together on one switchboard. The second projector motor is switched on at the appearance of the first cue mark and, using two hands, the lamps are switched over at the appearance of the second.

Cowley.

A. L. A'HERN.

IN DEFENCE OF THE CLUBS

Sir,—May an old war horse, who first sniffed the characteristic odour of sub-standard cine film nearly fifteen years ago, add a few whinnies to the discussion which must inevitably follow the publication of the article by Mr. George W. Eves.

First confessing that I—and all my contemporary pioneers in 16mm. and 9.5mm.—have committed all the crimes described by Mr. Eves, may I say without mincing words that his article is as much an indictment of himself as it is of anybody, and that much of what he said has no bearing whatever on whether a cine club is a desirable or an undesirable thing. Two cine clubs can differ from one another quite as considerably as, for example, the Athenaeum and the Lower Woggle Social Group differ from each other in another class of club, so that it is most dangerous to generalise broadly upon the issue.

Mr. Eves confesses that he himself was guilty of preparing a script which required considerable technical knowledge and then tried to film it with untrained people. He started work without having the assistance of at least one essential official—a continuity clerk. He demonstrates that his artistes had had no previous experience in film acting or in make-up.

Yet in no case is there any evidence that the persons participating took any steps, by practice, study or in any other way to fit themselves for the jobs they had undertaken.

Is it any wonder that such chaos, coupled with the fact that the whole thing dragged on over weeks and months, resulted in the participants re-discovering their interest in their social doings?

Yet not one word of the foregoing constitutes a justifiable criticism of the club

principle. It merely means that a lot of unwisely enthusiastic people tried to do something beyond their untrained abilities, with the inevitable result. It is as if a perfect novice had essayed a round of golf with a leading professional in a public tournament, or an 'L' driver had suddenly decided to compete at Brooklands. Neither of those events would invalidate either golf tournaments or Brooklands.

It has been my privilege to meet and to lecture to the members of very many film societies throughout the country, and I can assure Mr. Eves that such organisations can last a long time, give considerable pleasure to their members, retain the membership of those persons, and turn out first-rate, worthwhile films.

It has always been my advice to clubs that they should practise the principle of Little and Good. Let them restrict their membership to the few people who are willing to work and to learn. Let them make short films as well as they know how.

Let Mr. Eves be honest, and ask himself what the result might have been had he given the same sober care to his club activities as he today gives to his personal film-making. Let him remember also that he must have acquired considerable knowledge of the hobby during those chaotic summer weeks, and that his subsequent individual work necessarily benefited by that knowledge.

Let him ask himself what sort of a show he would make of things in a club today, when he could go to work armed with the experience and knowledge he has since acquired, so that he would be able to maintain his position and opinions against the well-meant but contradictory and multifarious advice of many fellow members. Then let him question whether he is being fair to the club principle when he condemns it because he, and a lot of other unfledged, inexperienced unrestrained beginners once violated all its advantages.

What if we cognoscenti sometimes shudder at the methods and the results! We are relatively few in number and we have our remedies. Mr. Eves took his by withdrawing himself from club life and working alone. I took mine by attempting to improve the method and work of many clubs, and also by collaborating with one or two other persons in making films which have received some approbation in the past. In other cases the leaders of policy in a club have taken their remedy by eliminating the 'dead wood' and turning their club into a more efficient production organisation.

None of these has altered the fact that both club and single worker have their functions, that neither is necessarily better than the other, and that both can further the art of the cinema. GEORGE H. SEWELL.

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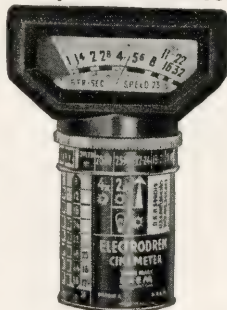
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Round the Societies

We hope that in our next issue we shall be able to publish encouraging reports of progress in club activities. Reports should reach us not later than November 7th and would best take the form of a summary of the quarter's work, with a syllabus of events scheduled for the next quarter.

THERE was an audience of over 100 at the recent premiere of "Fools Men Are," made by Chalfont Productions (Hon. Sec. : F. H. Matthews, 31, Chalfont Way, Ealing, W.13). The film, which took 18 months to make, was very well received by even the most critical. Commenting on a dog which plays a leading part, the local paper said : "A clever dog, not to be forgotten." The story for the next production—a drama—has already been written, and plans are proceeding well.

* * *

The **Beckenham C.S.** (Hon. Sec. : J. W. Mantle, 56, Croydon Road, Beckenham, Kent) has just completed "The Vacant Chair," a polished production—on both 9.5mm. and 16mm.—which is well up to the society's high standard. The story is, briefly, this : A man, interested in the occult, invites a friend round for the evening but before the friend arrives, visits a doctor, who warns him that his heart is weak and that any sudden exertion is likely to have serious consequences.

During the course of the evening the occultist tells how his son met with a macabre experience in North Wales. He had been searching for a girl who had been lost on the mountain and had arrived at a hut, baffled and exhausted. Suddenly the door flew open and a stranger was revealed framed on the threshold. The newcomer told the young man and his friend to go to a part of the mountain where they had never expected to find the girl. When they look up again he had gone. But they find the girl, after having discovered that their visitor was a famous mountaineer—who met his death years before in the locality to which he had directed them . . .

The narrator of this tale mentions to his guest that he has a book containing a photograph of the dead climber—the book which enabled his son to identify him—and goes to fetch it. In taking it from the bookcase he drops it, stoops suddenly to pick it up. His hand on the floor opens and closes convulsively, then is rigid . . . The maid is

startled by the noise of someone falling and goes downstairs to investigate.

But the man returns to his friend, with the book. One gets a sudden shock of surprise at his appearance: it is unexpected, yes, but it seems normal enough, were it not that one senses that element of the spine-chilling unknown. The maid bursts in the room, distracted. The visitor follows her to the next room. His host is lying on the floor, dead. Amazed and fearful, he rushes back to the room where he had left him a minute before. There is no one there...

This film is admirably done in all departments. The only aspect of it that appears to be not quite right is the lighting. One gets the impression that it is in the wrong key throughout, and this is particularly noticeable in the shots of the maid's bedroom, where she is sprawled on the bed, reading a thriller. It needs to be more sombre to assist the feeling of eeriness, which is, nevertheless, cunningly put over.

The appearance of the ghost in the hut is first-rate: dramatic, forceful and with no hint of the ludicrous, but it is rather spoiled by the reactions of the two searchers. One of them gets up to take down a book in which he remembers seeing a photograph of their visitor, and is extraordinarily blase and philosophical about it. His companion, who may have thought that the ghost was a flesh and blood intruder, apparently does not give its equally mysterious and unexpected disappearance another thought. If someone had made a dramatic appearance in a lonely hut in which we were, we think we should at least have gone to the door to see where he had gone, if only to reassure ourselves that we had not been seeing things.

The flashback begins by the narrator saying: "He was climbing in North Wales." Then comes a single shot of mountain scenery, then back to the speaker. It would be advisable, we think, to take it out, for one shot alone suggests a child's illustrated alphabet: "C-a-t, cat. And here, children, is a cat." Were there more mountain shots to suggest the 'atmosphere,' this objection would not have arisen, but one shot alone is more of an interpolation than an interpretation.

The climbing scenes are quite convincing, but there does not seem to be much point in some ultra big close-ups of the climber's boots. They do not slip on the rocks, precipitating the wearer to death hundreds of feet below; they just help him to negotiate not too difficult country, so there is no need to draw attention to them in so marked a manner.

The return of the dead man in the main narrative is, as we have indicated, most compelling (and the part is admirably acted

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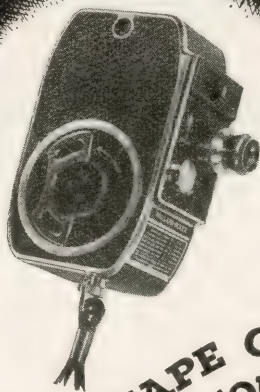
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throughout). But is not the ghost a little capricious? The other one had a practical purpose for his return, but the second came back, it seems, only to show that the dead do return. One does not know why—rather reminding one of the story of the man who asked a fellow traveller: "Do you believe in ghosts?" "Yes," replied the traveller, and vanished into thin air.

But everyone concerned in the production of "The Vacant Chair" has indeed done a very good job. Technically it is most competent and the presentation is convincing. It is no easy business to trade in ghosts without the transaction becoming slightly ludicrous. We were quite thrilled by certain parts of the film, though normally we are as sceptical about filmic incursions into the unknown as were the two climbers.

Six months have passed, by the way, since Beckenham had to give up its studio and theatre, but such members as have not evacuated or been called up have been meeting regularly at one another's houses to show films and discuss cine topics; and they hope to keep this up for the duration.

* * *

The opening shots of the **Armley C.S.** first production (8mm.) have been taken, but further shots are held up pending the next quota of film stock. General preparations and rehearsals, however, are going well. Although the society is only a few months old it has given two 16mm. sound film shows, two 9.5mm. silent shows, and an 8mm. programme. (Hon. Sec.: W. Greenwood, 10, Scarborough Street, Armley).

* * *

We were glad to have a letter from a member of the **Barnsley A.C.C.**, who, now in the R.A.F., still retains his interest in cine. All the active members of this society are now in the Forces but three or four (including our correspondent, L/AC. P. F. Sims) manage to get together fairly frequently to discuss the theoretical side and talk of future trends. Good work!

* * *

United Film Productions (Hon. Sec.: J. Searle-Shirley, 25a, Cromford Road, East Putney, S.W.18) have, surprisingly, increased their membership of recent months. So members are working on two scripts to be filmed as soon as conditions permit. A competition is being held for a design for a club leader to be spliced into club productions and members' films chosen to represent the society. Recent activities have consisted of two lectures on colour films and one on the making of cartoons.

5-Minute Films

Notes on cameo films well worth the amateur's study, since they tell a story in the very minimum of footage. Every cinema shows these 5-minute M. of I. films. Below are mentioned a few of especial interest.

HOME GUARD. A Strand film. Production and direction: Donald Taylor. Associate director: Ivan Moffat. Camera: George Noble. With Bernard Miles. 5 mins.

Into a Hertfordshire pub comes one of the locals who has just returned from a special Home Guard training course at Osterley Park, and he describes the course to his friends. This short film is a tour de force on the part of Bernard Miles. Although a professional actor, he fits perfectly into his background and its real characters. Much of the film shows Home Guard trainees in action, with his voice running on as commentary.

He caps the performance by taking out a dirty exercise book in which he has written his notes, and quotes, in halting country English, a passage from Shakespeare's *King John*. It is difficult to describe just how effectively he carries the whole thing off. It is more than a matter of speech. There is a central firmness, almost a hardness in his characterisation, typical of a man at one with his element and conscious of the grim purpose of his training, against which the good-natured jokes of his friends bounce like peas against a ship's plating. Bernard Miles stands in the forefront of the handful of actors who can perform with realism in a real setting.

NIGHT WATCH. A Strand film. Production and direction: Donald Taylor. Associate director: Ralph Bond. Camera: G. Noble and L. Banes. Script: Rodney Ackland and Reg. Groves. Distribution: M.O.I. 5 mins.

This is quite definitely one of the most effective shorts put out by the Ministry of Information for some time. A soldier and his girl have only half-an-hour together before he returns to his regiment. They decide to find a quiet spot to be together. Wherever they go they are disturbed, by a street warden, A.F.S. men going on duty, ambulance men waiting for a call, policemen patrolling the park. A raid begins, and the soldier decides to take the girl home. As he does so, he reflects on the comfort of leaving her so well guarded and looked after.

There are several things in this film which make it last in the memory. To meet her soldier boy, the girl has dressed in her best, and has new shoes on which hurt. Every now and again on their tramp she has to stop and ease her foot. How much difference

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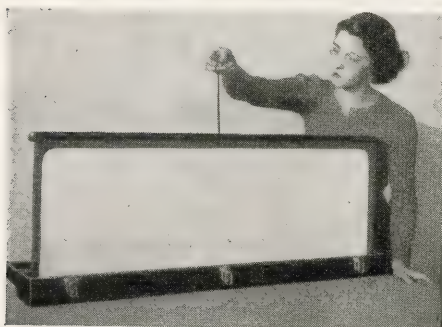
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such a simple touch makes to the reality and humanness of what would otherwise be a deadly straightforward moral tale. The characters, too, are amazingly well played, without theatrical exaggeration or self-conscious awkwardness. The only doubt is whether they are not made too vivid. Was it necessary to make it the soldier's last half-hour? Sympathy for the young couple overshadows the intention of the film. The balance was not redressed by the closing moral reflections, which were the clumsiest part of the whole.

QUEEN'S MESSENGER. A Jay Gardner Lewis Production. Direction: J. Lewis. Associate producer: Basil Wright. Distribution: M.O.I. 5 mins.

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You will find it possible to do the work visually by means of a focussing screen in the gate and a magnifier, using either a small mirror or prism to turn the image through a right angle to permit of easier viewing. If you are not sure of the results you will obtain in this way you can arrive at the same result by setting up a number of sticks or posts in echelon before the camera, each marked plainly with its distance from the camera, rotate the lens to a marked point,

and then from the resultant photograph ascertaining the distance focussed upon with a given lens position.

For greater distances than will be possible by simple rotation (i.e., when you wish to photograph at shorter distances and therefore have to project the lens farther forward), we suggest you abandon the idea of the distance piece and use supplementary lenses instead. Briefly, the principle is this: given a camera lens set at infinity, if you place in front of it, and as near to it as is reasonably possible, a supplementary lens with a focal length of x inches, you will obtain a sharp picture of an object placed x inches from the supplementary lens. At that same time you will secure the maximum value of the nominal aperture of the lens, whereas when you project the lens itself farther away from the focal plane the nominal value of the lens is greater than the true effective aperture.

To take an extreme case, if a lens is projected forward to twice its normal focal length (as when taking same-size pictures) the nominal aperture has a true value equivalent to only one quarter of the exposure value of the nominal value. That is because the value of an aperture is the relationship between the diameter of the aperture and the actual distance between the node of the lens and the focal plane.

You will probably find that the local Woolworth's will provide you with all the supplementary lenses you require, in the form of spectacle lenses. Their number markings correspond to their focal lengths in inches. Alternatively your local optician can supply you.

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How can I find out the focal length of a lens and what is a standard thread?—R.B.

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